

DNR NEWS

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Drought triggers statewide Water Shortage Warning

The Department of Natural Resources and the state Department of Homeland Security have issued a Water Shortage Warning for all counties in Indiana due to drought conditions.

Under the state's Water Shortage Plan, notification letters are being sent to owners and operators of significant water withdrawal facilities calling on them to implement voluntary measures that will result in a reduction in water use by 10 to 15 percent.

The notification follows a previously issued warning on July 2 to significant water withdrawal facilities in 32 counties in northeast and southwest Indiana.

State law defines a significant water withdrawal facility (SWWF) as one capable of withdrawing 100,000 gallons of water per day from all sources—ground water, surface water, or a combination of the two.

The objective of the Water Shortage Warning stage is to prepare a coordinated response to potential water supply problems and to initiate voluntary conservation measures in an effort to avoid or reduce shortages, relieve stressed water sources, and forestall the need for mandatory water use restrictions.

Public water supply systems are advised to immediately develop and update water shortage contingency plans for their respective systems if they don't already have one.

Although the Water Shortage Warning is directed at SWWFs, all Hoosiers are encouraged to conserve water and energy use. Conserving energy helps conserve water. Taking voluntary actions now will help later if conditions worsen.

DNR and DHS work with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Indiana Department of Agriculture, Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, and the National Weather Service to implement the Water Shortage Plan.

The state's Water Shortage Plan was developed in 1994 and updated in 2009. Recommended water conservation actions in the plan can be found at www.in.gov/dnr/water/files/watshplan.pdf